

Subject: MS student needed for mangrove-salt marsh food web project in Louisiana

“Black Mangrove Expansion & Estuarine Fisheries in Louisiana”

Seeking a highly motivated student to begin graduate research (M.S. candidate) at Louisiana State University’s (LSU) Department of Oceanography and Coastal Sciences (DOCS) starting as soon as possible (May/June 2016). The student will join a team of researchers from LSU and The Water Institute of the Gulf on an interdisciplinary project in coastal Louisiana examining the ecological effects of climate-driven expansion of black mangroves on saltmarsh food-webs that support estuarine fisheries.

The student will be based in the Polito Lab at LSU (www.oceanography.lsu.edu/politolab) and work closely with Dr. Melissa Baustian at the Water Institute of the Gulf (<http://thewaterinstitute.org/who-we-are/staff/Melissa-Baustian>). Specifically, the student will conduct field and laboratory studies (bulk and compound-specific stable isotope analysis) in coastal Louisiana to better understand how shifts in marsh vegetation influence the abundance of juvenile nekton, the stability of the food webs, and the use of specific basal carbon sources supporting commercially important species. Two years of tuition and stipend support (\$20k per year) are available for the selected candidate.

Desired qualifications include: 1) B.S. degree in biology, ecology, fisheries, marine science, oceanography, or relevant discipline, 2) relevant field experience, particularly specific to estuarine habitats and fisheries, 3) relevant laboratory experience, particularly in stable isotope analyses.

To Apply: Interested candidates should contact Dr. Polito (mpolito@lsu.edu) with a single pdf containing a cover letter with your research interests and experience, CV, GPA, GRE scores and contact information for three professional references. In addition they should fill out a pre-application form for the DOCS graduate program (www.oceanography.lsu.edu/index.php/academics/pre-application-form/) and indicate that you would like to work with Dr. Polito. Applications will be assessed as submitted and the position will remain open until a candidate is selected. A May/June 2016 start date is required due to associated field work.

Melissa M. Baustian, Ph.D. | Coastal Ecologist
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